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LB 150

5,116 beds are going to be needed by the year 2002.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: All right. Thank you. Now isn't it a fact, Senator Wehrbein, that no one of the, quote, solutions or whatever we want to call them detailed on the Legislation and Prison Population chart are in and of themselves a solution which obviates the need for LB 150 and additional expenditures for more facilities in the future? Is that correct?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: That's the way I interpret those numbers, and each can draw their own conclusions, but if you look at those, each one singularly, they do not make a great deal of impact unless you add them up and that's some of the options that we have to consider.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: All right. Thank you. Senator Witek, you are articulating, and I heard Senator Stuhr before you articulating where a lot of our citizenry are, but I think the responsibility of this body is to lead not follow. Anybody can hold their finger up in the air. I'm not suggesting you're doing that. People who want increased correction are a legitimate constituency of course that ought to be represented on this floor. People who want longer sentences, more incarceration, more prison time, less positive time, those are all legitimate points of view, but they do carry a price tag and now is the moment for having the discussion about how we are responsibly going to solve the problem and not look like 49 fools because we kept doing...giving the people the simple solution that they could understand they wanted without ever leading them to the difficult conclusions that are required to make those simple solutions work, namely...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: ...spending the money to build the facilities, to provide the guards, to employ the people in order to maintain the public safety in accordance with those mandates that are requirements of the people. I want to say again, and I'll repeat it more than once, if we want to preside over a real tax increase, twiddle our thumbs, play naive, don't respond to the legitimate calls that we have a population, prison population, problem that may cause the federal courts to take